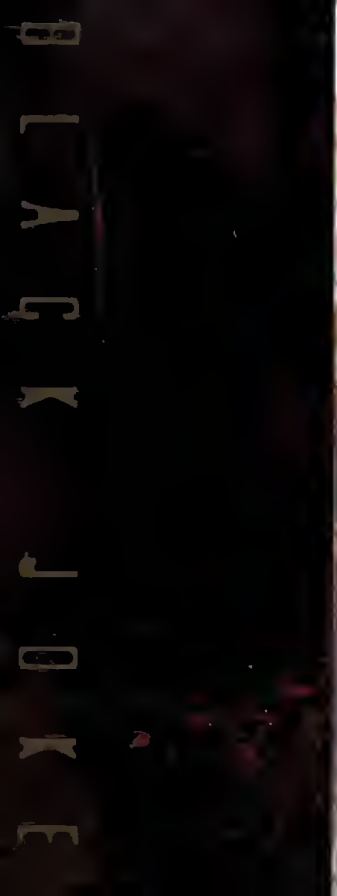

Power
BLACK JOKE
黑色幽默
6
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BLACK JOKE
黑色幽默
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簡歐霸無意間解救了交到前男友詛咒的馬約里家族千金摩雷娜・摩雷娜，因此對簡歐霸一見傾心。

但是簡歐霸卻說他早已心存所屬，而他心中的「聖女」究竟是何方神聖!?

不肯死心的摩雷娜終於不擇手段要得到簡歐霸，但是她的這份執著會為自己的家族帶來什麼樣的厄運!?

書名	集數
Black Joke～黑色幽默～	1－6
Lives～異獸王～	全2冊

BLACK JOKE
田口雅之
協力 小池倫太郎
6

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※本作品純屬虛構，與現實人物、團體等毫無任何關聯

BLACK JOKE

黑色幽默

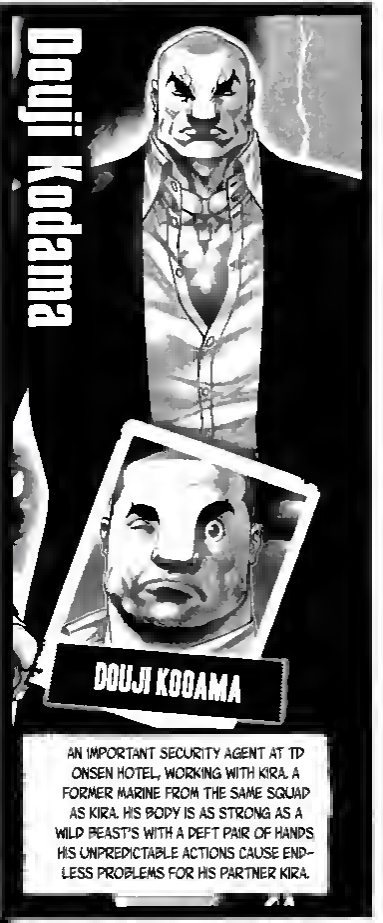
OVERVIEW

Characters

STORY

JAPAN IS NOW THE 51ST STATE OF THE USA, AND HOPE STILL SURVIVES ON NEON ISLAND, A MAN-MADE ISLAND IN JAPAN'S TOKYO BAY. GANGS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD CONSTANTLY VIE FOR TURF TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ITS LEGAL GAMBLING AND PROSTITUTION INDUSTRIES. THIS MANGA CENTERS ON TD ONSEN, THE ONLY ESTABLISHMENT ON NEON ISLAND UNDER JAPANESE MANAGEMENT.

Kiyoshi Kira
KIYOSHI KIRA
AN EXECUTIVE FOR THE SOLE JAPANESE GANG ON NEON ISLAND WITH A COVER IDENTITY OF A MANAGER OF TD ONSEN. FORMERLY IN THE MARINE CORPS, HE FAVORS BRAINS OVER BRAWN. QUICK AND EFFICIENT, BUT HEARTLESS IN HIS WORK. AN EXPERT NEGOTIATOR OFTEN INVOLVED IN DANGEROUS MISSIONS. HIGHLY KNOWLEDGEABLE AND CHARISMATIC.


Douji Kodama
DOUJI KODAMA
AN IMPORTANT SECURITY AGENT AT TD ONSEN HOTEL, WORKING WITH KIRA. A FORMER MARINE FROM THE SAME SQUAD AS KIRA. HIS BODY IS AS STRONG AS A WILD BEAST'S WITH A DEFT PAIR OF HANDS. HIS UNPREDICTABLE ACTIONS CAUSE ENDLESS PROBLEMS FOR HIS PARTNER KIRA.

Akari Kuroki

AKARI KUROKI

NOT MERELY TODOME'S PERSONAL BODY-GUARD, SHE IS MORE LIKE A SKILLED NINJA ASSASSIN, HIDING COUNTLESS WEAPONS UNDER THE SOFT FOLDS OF HER VICTORIAN FASHIONS. INSTANTLY, MERCILESSLY DISPATCHES ALL ENEMIES. SILENT AND ALOOF TO OTHERS.. EXCEPT PERHAPS TO KODAMA?

Kensuke Todome

KENSUKE TODOME

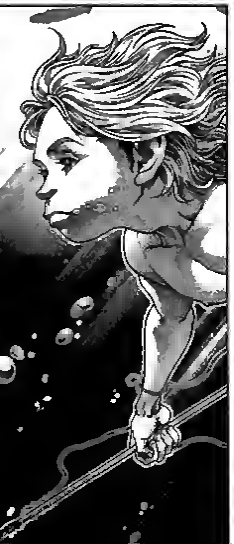
THE PRESIDENT OF TD ONSEN, AND KIRA AND KODAMA'S BOSS. HIS FACE DISPLAYS EITHER A SMILE OF FLATTERY OR A CRUEL, HEARTLESS EXPRESSION. COOPERATES WITH THE OTHER UNDERWORLD GANGS ON NEON ISLAND WHILE TRYING TO GAIN THE UPPER HAND. EVEN HIS SUBORDINATES HAVE A HARD TIME FIGURING HIM OUT, AN ODD MAN, HARD TO PLEASE.

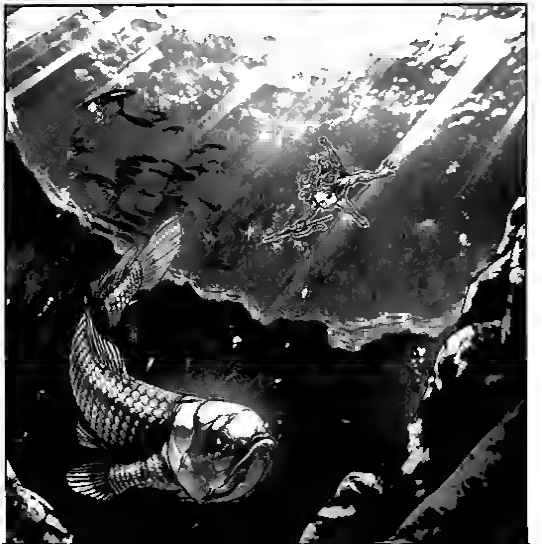
RUNOVER

RUNOVER

AN EXECUTIVE OF THE SIONE FAMIGLIA BASED IN NAPLES, ITALY. HE GAINED HIS NICKNAME OF RUNOVER AFTER AN INFAMOUS INCIDENT WHERE HE FATALLY MOWED DOWN A TRAITOR WITH HIS WHEELCHAIR. HE IS IMPATIENT AND HEARTLESS, BUT VALUES HONOR; THUS, HE IS TRUSTED BY MEMBERS OF HIS GANG.

CHAPTER 12: LOVE FROM AFAR





IT WOULD BE BAD IF THOSE GUYS DISCOVERED US.
IT'S ALREADY DAWN, LET'S GO BACK TO THE CAVE.
HEY...

WE'VE CAUGHT ENOUGH FISH. IT'S TIME FOR US TO GO.
I'VE COL-LECTED LOTS OF SEA SNAILS TOO. ♡

WAIT FOR ME!!
HEY!
!
MAMA!
♡

I CAUGHT LOTS OF FISH
I COLLECTED LOTS OF SEA SNAILS TOO. ♡
YOU WORKED HARD ♡
COME HERE..
...AND TELL YOUR FATHER THAT YOU'VE RETURNED.

CHAPTER 32:
LOVE FROM AFAR

NA-
PLES,
ITALY
A COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN EUROPEAN UNDERWORLD POSSES
DON'T YOU KNOW THAT BE-TRAYAL IS UNPARDO-NABLE!?

MY LOVER,
MORENA MAYORE,
I RISKED MY LIFE FOR YOU
THIS SCAR IS MY BADGE OF LOVE!! YOUR CHANGE OF HEART IS A COMPLETE DISGRACE!!
I'M SORRY, BUT I CANNOT CONTROL MY FEELINGS.

AH, GENTLEMEN
CUT THE CRAP!
WAH!
PLEASE MAKE WAY FOR ME
I'M SORRY TO INTERRUPT.
SHUT UP AND KEEP STILL UNTIL WE'RE DONE
DON'T EXPECT TO ALWAYS GET THE RIGHT OF WAY JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE DISABLED

Whisk!
Splat

YAA-RGH!
URGH!
.....
I TOLD YOU TO MAKE WAY FOR ME...
AND I CAN'T STAND SLOW GUYS.

.....
ASS-HOLE.
HOW DARE YOU SHOOT AT US?!
I AD-DRESSED YOU GEN-TLEMEN RESPECT-FULLY
YOU SHOULD RECIPRO-CATE RESPECT WITH RESPECT

BOSS.
!
WELL, THEN, I'LL ANSWER YOUR VIO-LENCE WITH VIOLENCE!!

BAS...
BAS-TARD!
FUCK YOU!!

!!

GARGH!

...SCUM-BAG!!
YOU...

I HAVE NO WISH TO GET INVOLVED IN SOME-ONE ELSE'S PERSON-AL CON-FLICT
STAY AWAY!
ER..
UMM

UHH...
BUT...
I ONLY TOOK ACTION BECAUSE OF THEIR INSOLENCE.
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF WOMEN LIKE YOU!
AND IN ANY CASE MY HEART ALREADY BELONGS TO A SAINT.
.....
.....

PLEASE, I BEG YOU. TELL ME RUN-OVER'S ROOM NUMBER.
screech
.....?
<whisper>
THANK YOU
MA'AM HE'S STAYING IN ROOM 3003, ON THE TOP FLOOR

WHO IS THAT WOMAN?
SHE'S MISS MORENA MAYORE, A DAUGHTER IN THE MAYORE FAMILY, THE LARGEST GANG IN CROATIA.
THE BOSS HELPED HER OUT OF A PINCH YESTERDAY
SHE MUST HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HER PRINCE CHARMING.
(smile)
I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE,

...MY HEART ALREADY BELONGS TO AN ANGEL.
.....
...EVEN SO... IT DOESN'T MATTER!
?!

Em-
brace
me
..Run
over

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AGHHHH
VOL. 33: LOVE FROM AFAR 2
MOTHER?
YES?
HOW LONG DO WE HAVE TO HIDE HERE?
DO WE HAVE TO HIDE AWAY UNTIL WE DIE?
.....

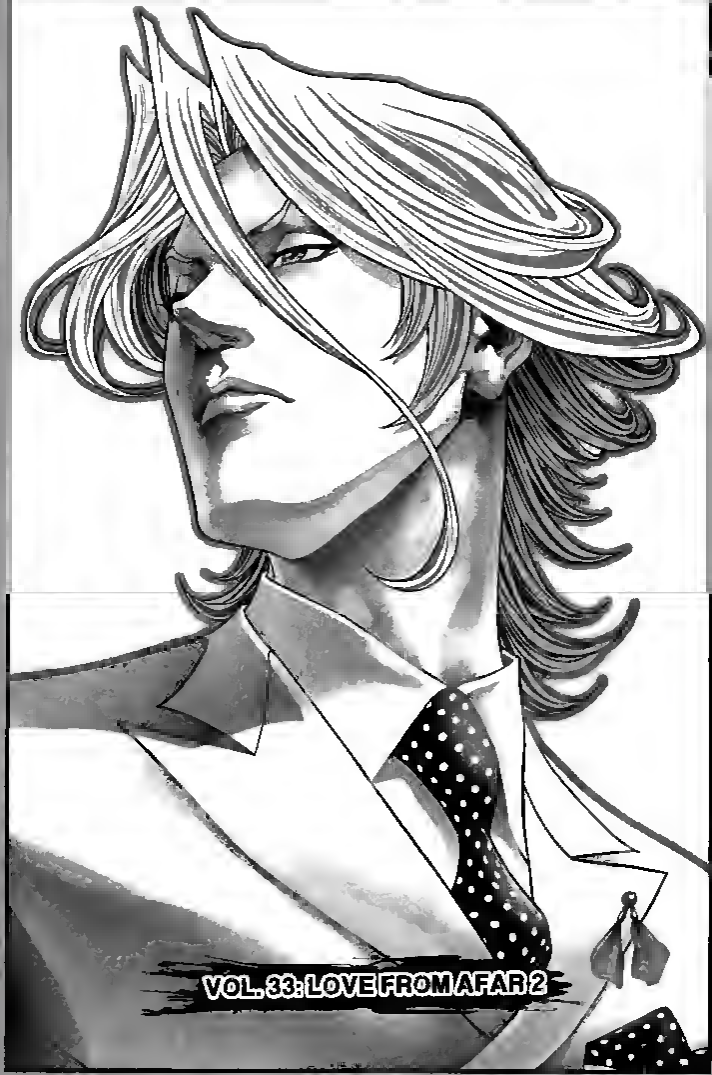
ADULT?
?

UNTIL YOU GROW UP INTO AN ADULT

HERE ♡

.....
HERE?

...THAT'S RIGHT. WHEN YOUR BROW GROWS STRONG AND HEAVY, THIS ♡ MEANS THAT YOU'RE AN ADULT
AND THEN, BOTH OF YOU CAN GO OUT TO THE VAST WORLD
!
LOOK.
YOU CAN TAKE THAT JOURNEY...
...WHEN YOU BECOME LIKE YOUR FATHER.


VOL. 33: LOVE FROM AFAR 2

I AL-READY TOLD YOU
—MY HEART ALREADY BELONGS TO A SAINTED WOMAN
EVEN SO, IT DOESN'T MATTER!
Embrace me, Runover.

YOU HAVE STOLEN MY HEART.
THE WORLD LOOKS DREARY TO ME UNLESS I'M LOOKING AT YOU.
MY SOUL CAN ONLY BE SALVAGED THROUGH THE JOY OF BECOMING ONE WITH YOU.
.....
WHAT A SELFISH WAY TO PROCLAIM YOUR LOVE.
DON'T THINK THAT ALL ITALIANS LUST AFTER WOMEN.
I WILL ONLY BE INTIMATE WITH MY BELOVED IDOL.
I CAN'T RESTRAIN MY PASSION ANY LONGER.
I'M BURNING WITH DESIRE AND CAN ONLY QUENCH ITS FLAMES...
...BY MAKING YOU MINE, RUNOVER.

?!
HUH?
Inject

caress
click
zzz
zip

Run-over.
...I love you. ♡
Love you so madly...

I'M SORRY TO BIND YOU UP LIKE THIS, MR. RUN-OVER.
BUT I'VE HEARD THAT YOU'RE A VERY DANGEROUS MAN, WITH OR WITHOUT YOUR WHEELCHAIR.
!
I'M SURE THAT YOUR MIND IS DRAWING A JUMBLE OF CONCLUSIONS.
PERHAPS WE'RE TREATING YOU THIS WAY BECAUSE YOU REJECTED MY DAUGHTER'S ADVANCES?
OR MAYBE MY GANG PLANS TO ATTACK YOURS?
NEITHER.

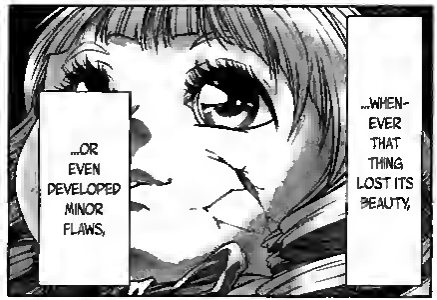
ACTUALLY,
I'M JUST ...
DETAINING YOU IN THE NAME OF PURE LOVE
...THOUGH I CAN'T DENY HAVING OTHER COMPLICATED REASONS)
BUT I STILL HOPE THAT YOU CAN ACCEPT MY GOOD FAITH.
AFTER ALL, I'VE SHOWN MY RESPECT BY COMING PERSONALLY...
TO MEET A DANGEROUS MAN LIKE YOU.
JERICHO MAIORI,
.....
BOSS OF THE CROATIA MOB,
...IS THAT OVERBEARING WOMAN YOUR DAUGHTER?

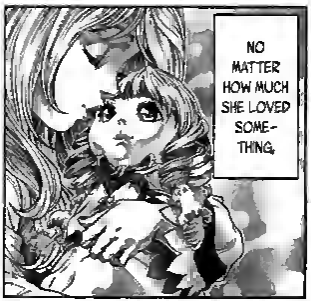
MO-
RENA
...
MORENA MAIOR! IS MY BELOVED DAUGHTER
.....
THAT CHILD IS PITIFUL.
..THE HORRIFYING INTERNAL WARS IN MY COUNTRY, CROATIA.
SIR, I BELIEVE YOU ARE AWARE OF...

HE WAS A STRONG, HANDSOME, AND RELIABLE MAN, AND WOULD HAVE BEEN THE SUCCESSOR OF THE MAIORI FAMILY
MY LITTLE GIRL HAD A BROTHER WHO WAS VERY MUCH OLDER THAN HER.
MORENA RESPECTED HER BROTHER FROM THE BOTTOM OF HER HEART.
BUT ...

...A STRAY BULLET FROM THE WAR...
...TOOK MY PRIDE AND JOY!!
AL-THOUGH HE STILL LIVES,
...HE NO LONGER HAS THE SPIRITED SOUL...
HE HAD IN THE PAST.
THAT LITTLE GIRL WOULD GAZE AT HER WEAK BRO-THER,
THE OLDER BROTHER SHE HAD ADMIRED AND LOOKED UP TO FOR SO LONG. HOWEVER, THE MAN BEFORE HER EYES HAD CHANGED COMPLE-TELY
WHO CAN BLAME MORENA FOR GOING MAD OVER THIS?
.....

IT CAUSED MY SWEET AND COMPASSIONATE DAUGHTER TO DEVELOP A TWISTED KIND OF LOVE.
THIS TRAGEDY CHANGED MORENA'S HEART.
THAT'S RIGHT.
.....
.....


...OR EVEN DEVELOPED MINOR FLAWS,
...WHENEVER THAT THING LOST ITS BEAUTY,


NO MATTER HOW MUCH SHE LOVED SOMETHING,

DO YOU REMEMBER THAT GUY?
THE SAME HAPPENED WITH THE MAN YOU MET LAST NIGHT.

...BANISH IT FROM HER HEART COMPLETELY.
...SHE WOULD TURN HER BACK ON IT...

FLAWLESS, ETERNAL BEAUTY IS THE ONLY WAY TO RETAIN MY DAUGHTER'S LOVE FOREVER.
JUST LOOK AT ME. I AM ALREADY FLAWED BEYOND SALVAGE!!
YOU ARE CON-TRA-DICTING YOUR-SELF.
....?

?!
THAT'S WHY I HAVE MY EYE ON YOU.
.....
THAT'S THE POINT!
TO THINK, MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER FINDS YOU WORTHY! A MAN AS DAMAGED AS YOU!!
INDEED, YOU SUSTAINED SEVERE INJURIES
AND LOST THE USE OF YOUR LEGS FROM YOUR COMRADES' BETRAYAL.
BUT THAT'S THE EXACT REASON, MR. RUN-OVER!!

THIS MEANS YOU CAN SAVE MORENA!!
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS!? DO YOU KNOW HOW IMPORTANT THIS IS?
DESPITE YOUR DREADFUL INJURIES, YOU STILL RETAIN THE ULTIMATE BEAUTY!
...ARE PERFECTION ITSELF!!
MR. RUN-OVER!!
YOU, WITH ALL YOUR DEFECTS...
I love you. ♡
Run-over ♡

EVEN NOW, YOU'RE STILL STRONG AS THE DEVIL!!
YOU ARE A PERFECT MAN!!

YOU'RE SUCH A PRECIOUS TREA-SURE!'
HEH!
HEH!
HEH!
HEH!
Heh!
HEH!
HEH!
HEH!
Heh!
HEH!
HEH!
Heh!
Heh!
HEH!
HEH!
Heh!
Heh!
?
I SAY,
MR. MAIORI,

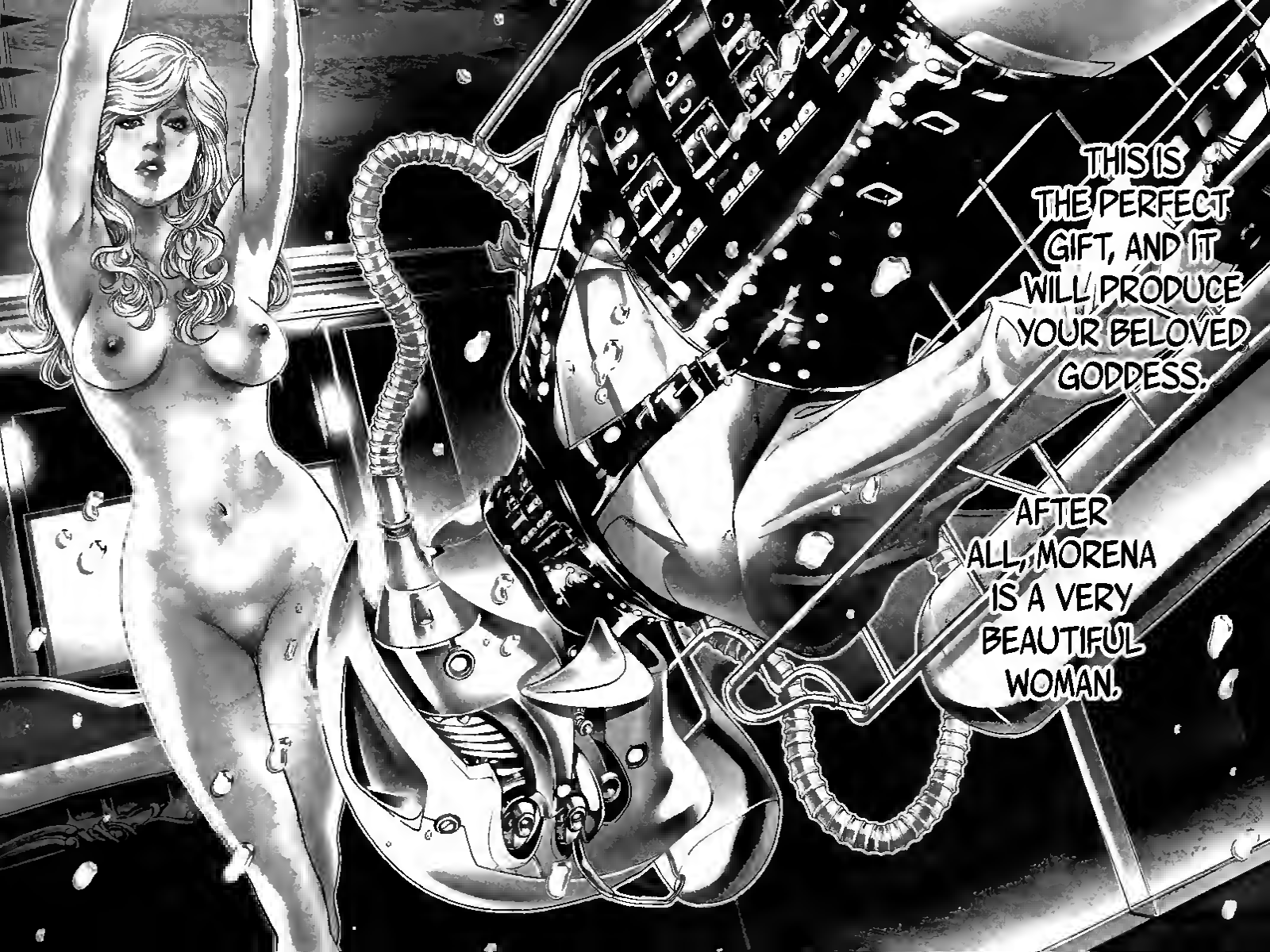
I HAVE NO WISH TO PLAY ALONG WITH YOUR PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA GAME
FIRST
I HAVE THREE THINGS TO SAY TO YOU
...HAS ALREADY BEGUN
SECOND
OUR WAR
...YOU'LL TRULY KNOW THE MEANING OF RUN-OVER!
My wheelchair will teach you!
THIRD
IF YOU LET ME LIVE, AS YOUR CHERISHED TREASURE,

MR. RUN-OVER,
YOU'RE EXACTLY LIKE THE RUMORS.
I KNOW.
.....
NO MATTER HOW MUCH OF A CRISIS YOU'RE IN, YOU MAINTAIN YOUR PRINCIPLES.
THAT IS THE REASON YOU'RE SO PERFECT EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE FLAWS.
?!
AND SO, I WILL CAST A SPELL ON YOU.

THIS ENCHANT-MENT WILL TRANS-FORM...
!!
...YOUR ROCK-SOLID PRINCIPLES INTO LOVE FOR MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER

IT IS NOT TORTURE OR PHYSICAL VIOLENCE.
...WHAT DEALS THE MOST PAIN TO HUMAN SANITY?
YOU KNOW, MR. RUN-OVER...
ACTUALLY, IT IS DEPRIVING A PERSON OF ALL THEIR SENSES.
SO WHAT IS IT THEN?
HUMANS ARE ACTUALLY VERY FRAGILE.
WHEN THEY ARE IN A UNIVERSE OF UTTER NOTHINGNESS, LITTLE BY LITTLE, SLOWLY BUT SURELY, THEIR SANITY CRUMBLES AWAY.
YOU WILL GRADUALLY LOSE ALL YOUR SENSES...
...YOUR SIGHT, HEARING, SMELL, EVEN THE SENSE OF TOUCH FROM YOUR ENTIRE BODY.
LOSING ALL YOUR SENSES IS EQUAL TO DEATH, RUNOVER. CAN YOU BEAR THE TERROR OF SUCH LONELINESS?

WE WILL SEND YOU IMAGES AT AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE SPEED.
BUT, REST ASSURED, WE WON'T KILL YOU. WE JUST WANT TO REPROGRAM YOUR PRINCIPLES.
OVER A PERIOD OF TIME, YOUR WILL WOULD DISSOLVE FROM DISUSE, AND YOU WOULD SILENTLY DIE.
UNCONSCIOUSLY, THESE IMAGES WILL BE IMPRINTED IN THE DEPTHS OF YOUR HEART...
...EVEN IF YOU LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS. AN IMAGE IS THE ULTIMATE GIFT TO SOMEONE IN A WORLD OF EMPTINESS.


THIS IS THE PERFECT GIFT, AND IT WILL PRODUCE YOUR BELOVED GODDESS.
AFTER ALL, MORENA IS A VERY BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

My be-loved,
...soon, we will become one.
フォボス

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by KOIKE Rintarou and TAGUCHI Masayuki

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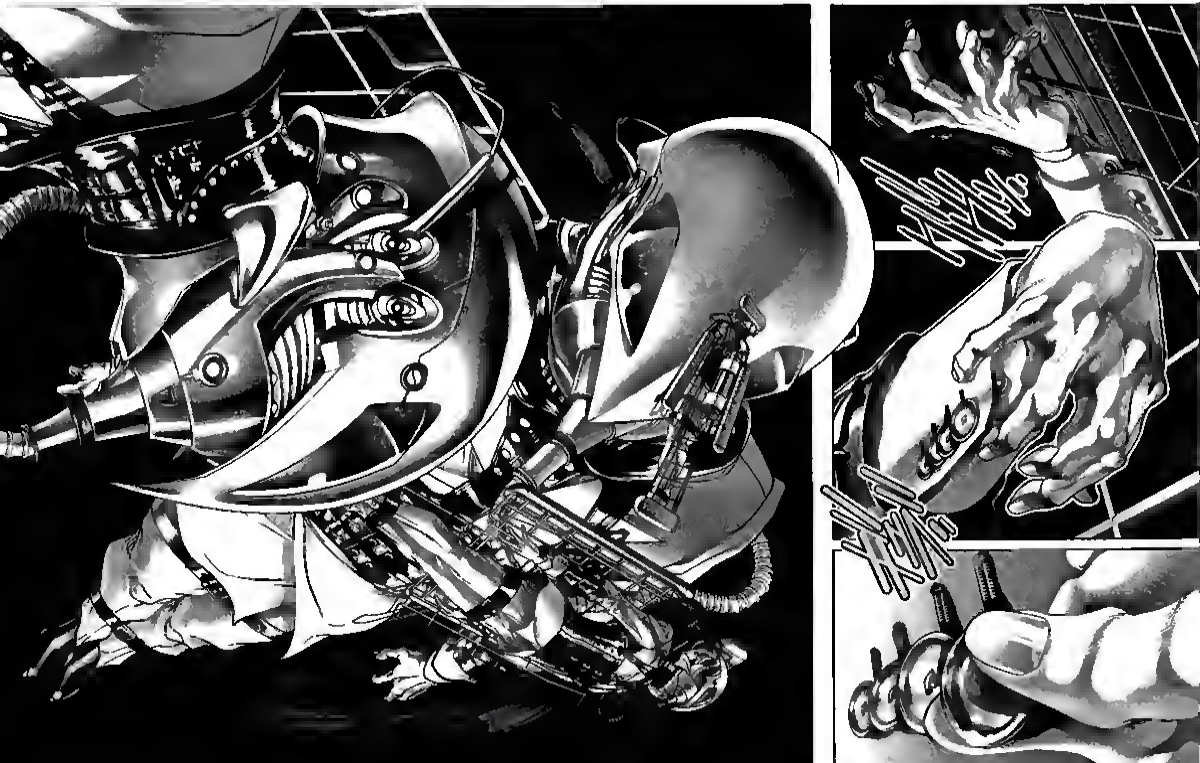
CHAPTER 34
LOVE FROM AFAR 3

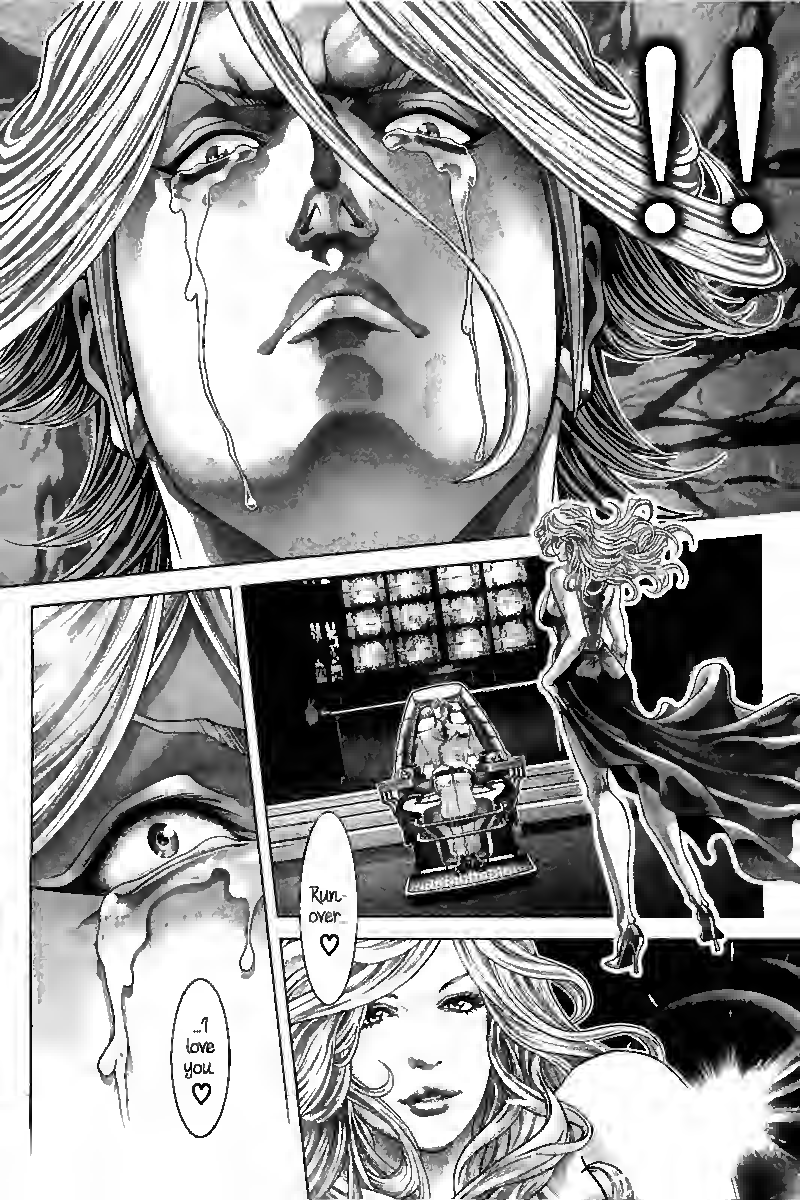


¡PEDRO!!

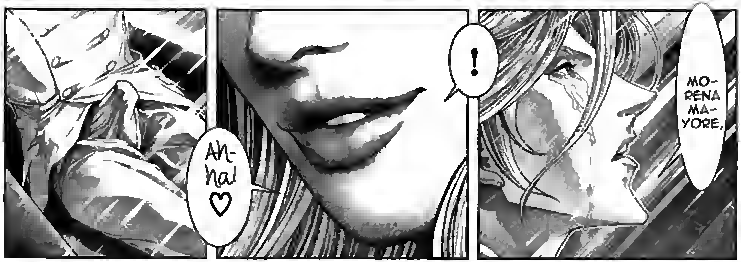
I WON'T LOSE TO YOU---!!
?!
OUCH!
HA-HA! WHY DID I SUDDENLY TRIP?
HUH?
PEDRO, WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME THAT WAY?
I CAN'T BE FRIENDS WITH YOU ANYMORE.
WHAT?!
BECAUSE YOU CAN NO LONGER...

WAH HH??
?!
..PLAY FOOT-BALL!!
WHY ARE THEY DISAP-PEARING?
WHAT?!
MY LEGS! WH T'S GOING ON?!
DON'T WORRY!!
MY LEGS..
MY... MY...

It's all right. You are still a♡ strong and perfect man.
I love you, Run-over. ♡
NO!!
!
I love you. ♡


!!
Run-over ♡
...I love you ♡

OH,
MO-
RENA...


!
AH-
hai
♡
MO-
RENA
MA-
YORE.

Mag-
nifi-
cent
♡
I'm so
happy
♡
that
you
are
so.. so
attract-
ed to
♡me

Won-derful ♡
EHP
I WILL KILL YOU!
IF YOU..
...EVER APPEAR IN FRONT OF ME AGAIN, I WILL KILL YOU!!

B-BUT
WHY?
I'VE TOLD YOU.
Eehh?!
MY HEART ALREADY BE-LONGS TO A SAINT!!
?!
!
PHT!
HUH?!
WHAT'S WRONG, MORENA?
SPURT

GUSH
!!
DON'T MOVE!
DO YOU WANT TO DIE, JERICHO MAYORE?
MILCO?
LOOK CLOSELY AT MY HAND MY AIM IS LOCKED ON YOUR THROAT!

ALL THE BUTTONS ON MY SUIT ARE SPECIALLY TAILORED
IN OTHER WORDS, THEY ARE DEADLY
MR. MAYORE.
I ALSO HAVE A LITTLE MAGIC UP MY SLEEVES
NOW,
FOR STARTERS, WHY DON'T YOU UNTIE ME?

MUCH BETTER
.....
I will be heading back now.
.....
LET ME THINK
BUT, WHY?
WHY DIDN'T THE BRAINWASHING WORK?! HOW COULD YOU RETAIN YOUR SANITY? HOW ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM NORMAL PEOPLE?!

You have made me quite mad.
YOU UNDERSTAND
I'M SURE
FOR YOUR INSOLENCE TO ME
I HAVE TO PUNISH YOU
AS FOR EXACTLY HOW I WILL DEAL WITH YOU ALL,
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT AS I ENJOY A GOOD MEAL AFTER I RETURN TO MY HOTEL

!!
THIS GUY...
CAN HE REALLY BE A DANGER-OUS MAN?
I MEAN, LOOK. HE'S CRAWLING ON THE GROUND SO PATHETI-CALLY.
EXACTLY LIKE A WORM.
ALSO, I'VE ALREADY BEATEN HIM ONCE!
CAN THIS SLUG REALLY BE THE FORMI-DABLE RUN-OVER?
NO!!

HIS STRENGTH IS ONLY AN ILLU-SION!!

¡¡¡BANG!!!
¡¡¡BANG!!!
¡¡¡BANG!!!

slap
.....
...EN-TLEMEN
WELL THEN.

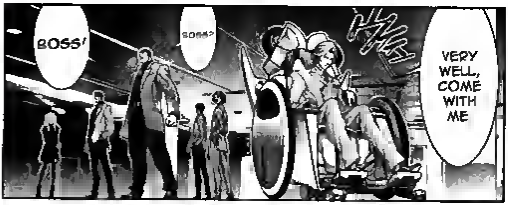
MAKE WAY FOR ME!!

CRAWL
CRAWL
CRAWL

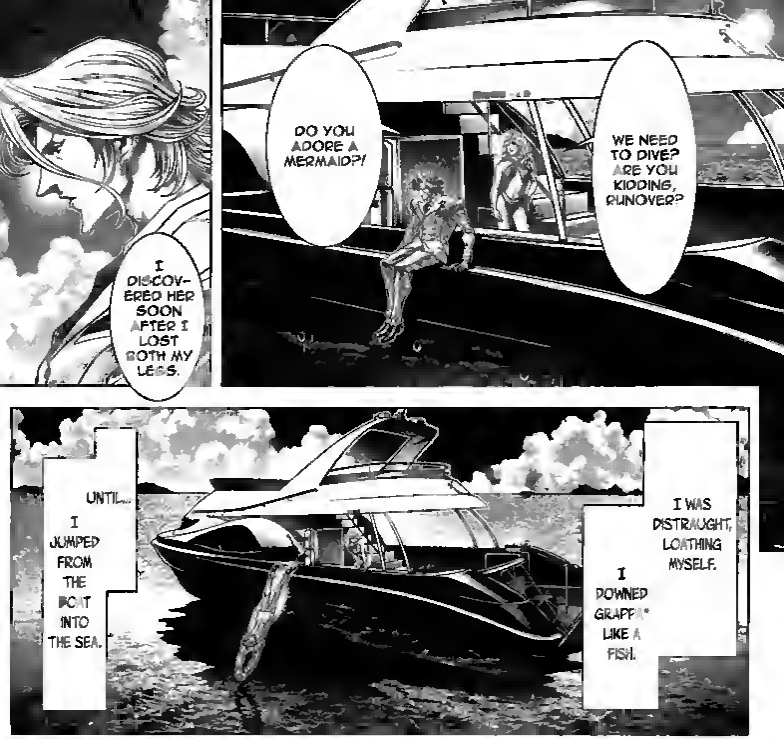
NAPLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
GRRR.
I'VE WARNED YOU...

YOU APPEARED BEFORE ME, I'D KILL YOU.
THAT THE NEXT TIME

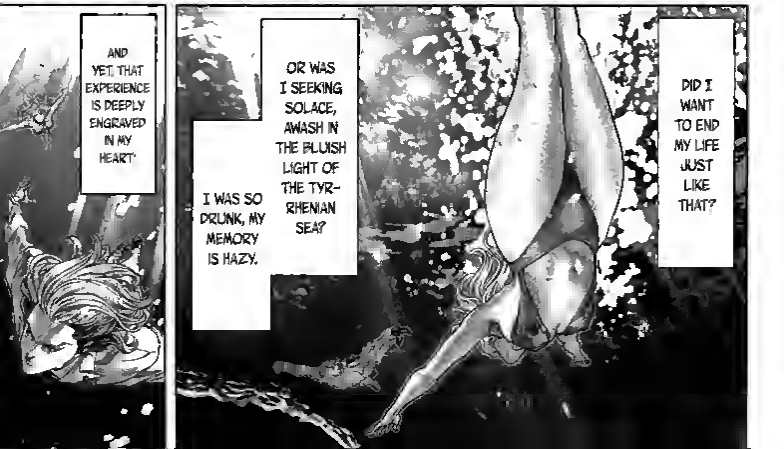
I HAVE NO QUALMS ABOUT DYING!!
AS LONG AS YOU LET ME MEET YOUR BELOVED ANGEL,
IT DOESN'T MATTER, EVEN IF YOU KILL ME


BOSS!
BOSS?
VERY WELL, COME WITH ME

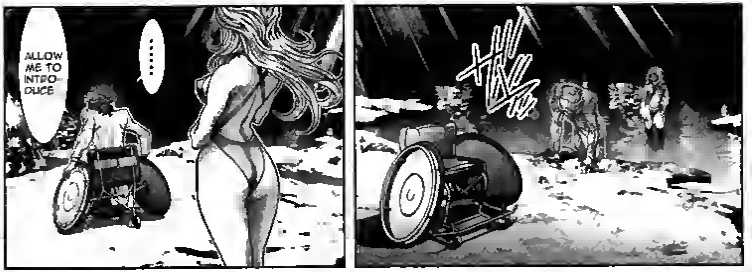
I WILL LET YOU MEET MY SAINTESS.


I DISCOVERED HER SOON AFTER I LOST BOTH MY LEGS.
DO YOU ADORE A MERMAID?!
WE NEED TO DIVE? ARE YOU KIDDING, RUNOVER?
UNTIL... I JUMPED FROM THE BOAT INTO THE SEA.
I DOWNED GRAPPA* LIKE A FISH.
I WAS DISTRAUGHT, LOATHING MYSELF.

*GRAPPA IS AN ITALIAN LIQUOR CONTAINING 30-60% ALCOHOL BY VOLUME.


AND YET, THAT EXPERIENCE IS DEEPLY ENGRAVED IN MY HEART.
I WAS SO DRUNK, MY MEMORY IS HAZY.
OR WAS I SEEKING SOLACE, AWASH IN THE PLUISH LIGHT OF THE TYRRHENIAN SEA?
DID I WANT TO END MY LIFE JUST LIKE THAT?

?!
...MY FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE ONE I CHERISH.


ALLOW ME TO INTRO-DUCE.
.....

EH?
...THE WOMAN I VEN-ERATE, THE BELOVED WOMAN OF MY HEART.
UN-FORTU-NATELY, I DON'T KNOW HER NAME.

YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH THIS WEIRD STATUE
IT CAN'T BE
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
NEANDERTHALS
THEY LIVED FROM AROUND 200 THOUSAND UNTIL AROUND 40 THOUSAND YEARS AGO
THEY ARE A SPECIES OF HUMAN
THERE ARE VARIOUS THEORIES FOR THEIR EXTINCTION: VIOLENT CONFLICTS WITH OUR ANCESTORS,
BEING LESS COMPETITIVE HUNTERS,
OR INTERBREEDING AND ASSIMILATION WITH MODERN HUMANS
I COME HERE TO HONOR HER,
VISITING HER COUNTLESS TIMES.
ALL ALONG, I TRIED TO IMAGINE, SPECULATE, AND UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS HALLOWED WOMAN WENT THROUGH IN HER LIFE

THEN WHO WAS PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE DEAD SAINT?
HOW-EVER, THERE WAS NONE FOR HER HUS-BAND.
HER SKULL WAS PLACED BEFORE HER STATUE IN TRIB-UTE.
THE STATUE NEXT TO HERS APPEARS TO BE HER HUSBAND. SHE MUST HAVE SCULPTED IT.
AFTER HER HUS-BAND DIED, IT'S LIKELY THEY LIVED IN SECLUSION IN THIS CAVE BECAUSE OF THE OTHER HUMAN RACES.
THE CAVE PAINTINGS SHOW THAT SHE HAD TWO SONS.
THE ANSWER IS HER CHIL-DREN.
I SIN-CERELY HOPE THEY HAD PEACE-FUL LIVES
WAS IT A JOUR-NEY OF DESPAIR, AND ON TO THEIR DEATHS?
WHAT HAP-PENED TO THEM AFTER THAT?
WHY? THEY MUST HAVE GONE ON A JOUR-NEY, LEAVING THE TINY CAVE AND GOING OUT INTO THE VAST WORLD!
BUT THERE ARE NO BONES OF CHILDREN IN THE CAVE

...A PARAGON OF SELFLESS-NESS.
YOU ARE
SCULPT-ING YOUR HUSBAND'S STATUE UNDER ADVERSITY AND GUID-ING YOUR CHILDREN PATIENTLY
MY BELOVED,
WHAT SELF-LESS LOVE YOU HAD.
UM, WAIT.
SO, THIS GOD-DESS OF YOUR HEART...
...IS A NEANDER-THAL WOMAN DEAD FOR TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS?!
.....
HEH
HEH

HEH!
Heh!
HEH!
COM-
PARED TO HER
YOU AND YOUR PSYCHO TRAUMA GAME ARE NOTHING AT ALL.
HEH!
HEH
Heh!
HEH!
Heh!
HEH!
HEH!
HEH!
Heh!
HEH!
Heh!
HEH!
HEH!
YOU
...FREAK!!
Heh!
HEH!
Heh!
HEH!
HEH!
Heh!
HEH!
Heh!
Heh!

AROUND 60 THOUSAND YEARS AGO...
!!
OH!
BROTHER
.....

.....
NICE TO MEET YOU
OUR NAMES ARE

BLACK JACK

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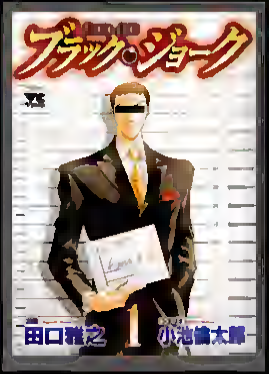
by KOIKE Rintarou and TAGUCHI Masayuki



Black Joke v6 ch34

Credits
Scanner: Claudia
Translator: Kanra
Proofreader: AirDale
Cleaner: TKW
Redraws pg01: Precyse
Typesetter: Precyse
QC: Fathom

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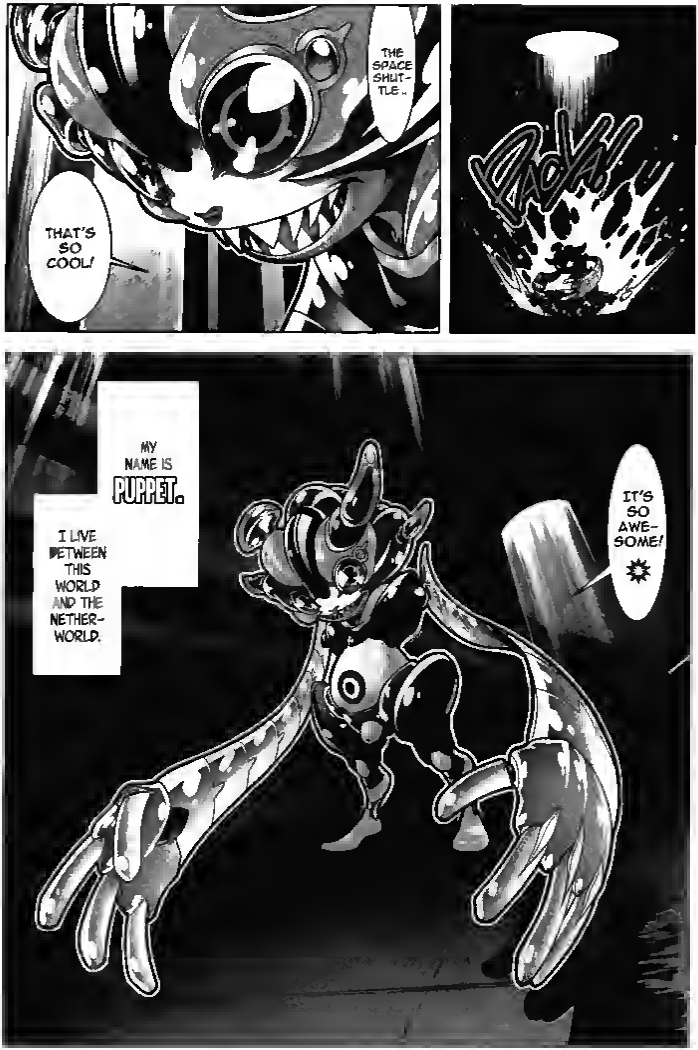
Artwork from Black Joke

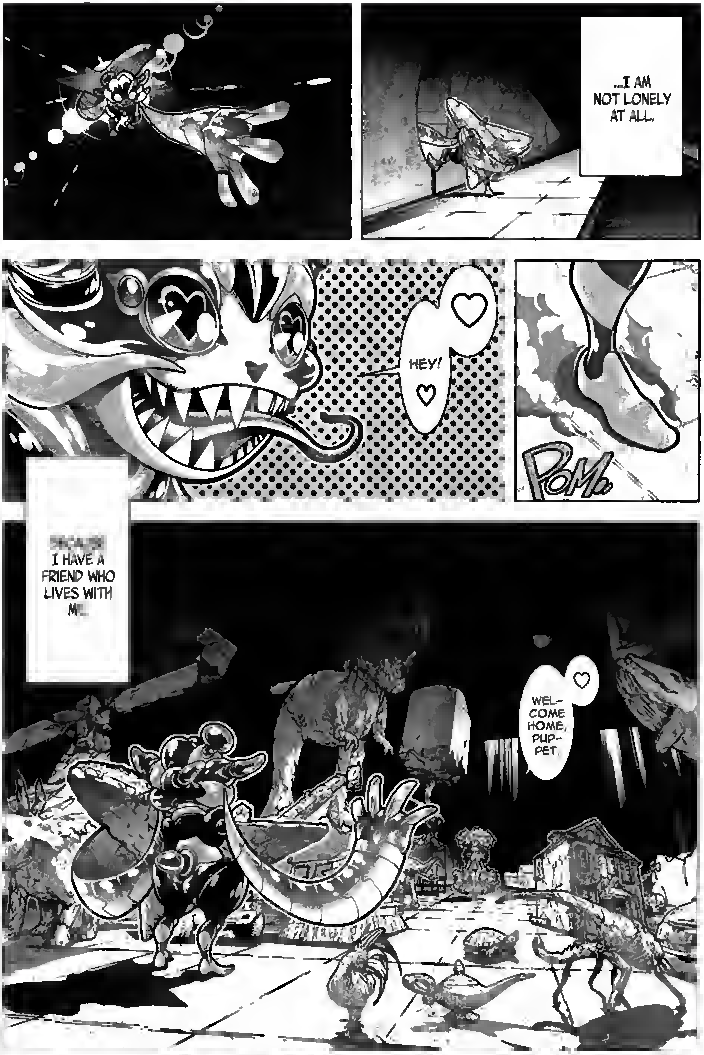
BLACK JOKE
CHAPTER 35
PUPPET 001

PUPPET
FC
MIKHAIL GORKY

BUT I OFTEN STUDIED THIS WORLD THROUGH A CRACK.
I WAS NOT ALLOWED OUT IN PUBLIC
BECAUSE MY UNUSUAL APPEARANCE IS TERRIFYING.
(sob)
AND THIS IS HOW..
NEWS
The space shuttle landed on earth safely at 4 AM
That's all for the morning news.
...I GOT TO KNOW THIS WORLD.
Whoa!


THE SPACE SHUTTLE..
THAT'S SO COOL!
Rok!
MY NAME IS PUPPET.
I LIVE BETWEEN THIS WORLD AND THE NETHER-WORLD.
IT'S SO AWE-SOME!

ZAP.
.....
KRAP..
..SKASH
SLECH!..
BUT...


...I AM NOT LONELY AT ALL...
HEY!
POM.
I HAVE A FRIEND WHO LIVES WITH ME.
WEL-COME HOME, PUP-PET.

THIS IS A SPACE SHUTTLE.
IT'S A PLANE THAT CAN FLY INTO☆ OUTER SPACE!!
♡ Look! A PRESENT FOR YOU! ☆
FLOWER GIRL IS ALWAYS BY MY SIDE.
OH THANK YOU!
PUP-PET! ♡
?

WHY DO YOU LOOK SO DOWN?
WHAT'S WRONG, FLOWER GIRL?
?!
I WANT TO LEAVE THE SEWERS
SORRY, PUPPET.
WHA-AAT?
...AND INVITED ME TO HIS HOME
BECAUSE, DESPITE MY APPEAR-ANCE, A MAN PRAISED MY BEAUTY...
FLIP

PSYCHOLOGIST
HAPPY MEAL
(INDIA)
FLIP

Heir to the Phantom Sword Style
Kanou Kourin
Japan
Mistress of the Boss of the Musashino Gang
Kishi Mayako
Japan
Russia Orthodox Church Priest
Nikolai Pbakarov
Russia

!
CLICK
RETIRED MERCENARY
SANDERMAN (MIAMI)
IS IT "HUM?"
INFORMATION BROKER
AFRO (MEXICO)

DELIVERY SPECIALIST
STRAY CAT
FRANCE

.....!
OH MY!
(smile)
TO THINK THAT YOU WOULD BE SO LATE,
YOU SWIFT CHEE-TAH
CLICK
YOU'RE ALWAYS PRECISELY PUNCTUAL.
AFTER ALL, IT'S YOUR PRIDE AS A DELIV-ERY SPE-CIALIST.
KIRA KIYOSHI
JAPAN

I HAD TO SHAKE OFF MY PURSUER IT TOOK SOME TIME
.....
REALLY?
W-WHO WAS YOUR "PURSUER?"
WAS IT "HIM?"
YES. IT WAS HIM.

PUPPET
IS
HERE?

SHIT
WHY THE TERRIFIED FACES,
YOU BUNCHA MOFO WIMPS?!

PUP-
PET.

I DON'T CARE IF THEY SAY NO ONE CAN BEAT HIM.
I WILL TURN THE TABLES AND KILL HIM!!
BUT... I HEARD THAT ...
NONE OF HIS TARGETS EVER SURVIVE.
LISTEN CAREFULLY!
WHO SAID MY GOAL WAS TO SUR-VIVE?
NO, I SAID THAT I WILL KILL HIM!!

WHAT ELSE THEN? ACCORDING TO YOUR FUCKED-UP INFORMATION ABOUT THAT MOTHER-FUCKING KILLER PUPPET,
...HE'S SOME CANDY-ASS PUTTING ON SOME STINKIN' PUPPET COSTUME AND PLAYING "LET'S KILL!"
HE'S JUST A FUCKING TRICK-OR-TREATER!!
BLECH!! JUST HEARING THAT FUCKING NONSENSE FROM A SCREWED-UP HACKER LIKE YOU
MAKES ME WANT TO PUKE! I CAN TELL YOU GOT NO COMBAT EXPERIENCE
YOUR MESSED-UP GEEKY MIND MAKES UP GODDAMN IMAGINARY MONSTERS
YOUR INABILITY TO TELL GOOD INTEL FROM BAD IS THE REASON YOU'RE BEING HUNTED!

YEAH, RIGHT. YOU'RE THE STRONG-ARM OF THIS OPER-ATION.
AND THAT'S WHY THERE'S A 8IG REWARD ON YOUR HEAD - YOU BREAK THINGS AND STEAL THINGS. STILL, YOU PERSIST IN DOING THINGS BY FORCE. YOU'RE THE PERFECT MUSCLEBOUND GOON!!
(smile)
(Roar)
HEY, AFRO, YOU FUCKER! HOW 'BOUT I FUCK-ING SHOW YOU WHAT IT'S LIKE TO TANGLE WITH A PERFECT MUSCLE-BOUND GOON?
HMM?
S-STOP IT!
THIS ISN'T THE TIME TO FIGHT AMONGST OUR-SELVES.
IF WE DON'T CO-OPERATE, WE CAN'T DEAL WITH THIS CRISIS.

UNFORTUNATELY I AM NOT A RELIGIOUS MAN.
AND I'M NOT INTERESTED IN SERMONS.
ALL THE MORE SO WHEN IT'S A FUCKIN' SERMON FROM SOME ASSHOLE PRIEST. COMPLETE FUCKING BULLSHIT!
MAYBE YOU BETTER START PRAYING!

SANDERMAN, WHAT NIKOLAI JUST SAID IS RIGHT.
IF WE DON'T WORK TOGETHER, WE CAN'T KILL HIM.
!
.....

A FORMI-DABLE MARTIAL ART
PUPPET USES A MARTIAL ART KNOWN AS "PAUZA ISCHEZAYET."
WHICH MEANS "THE VANISHING DISTANCE" IN RUSSIAN"
EXACT-LY...
THIS STYLE OF FIGHTING WILL EVEN MAKE A MUSCLE-MAN OR A MAN WITH COMBAT EXPERI-ENCE RUN FOR HIS LIFE
IT'S OUT OF THIS WORLD. LIKE SOME-THING OUT OF A COMIC BOOK
(smile)

I HEARD THAT IT'S A MIXED MARTIAL ART STYLE COMBINING VARIOUS SECRET TECHNIQUES
DEVELOPED BY AN EXILED MARTIAL ARTS MASTER FROM CHINA.
THE FORM OF FIGHTING WAS DEVELOPED DURING THE COLD WAR IN THE SOVIET UNION.
IT'S ALSO KNOWN AS "THE EXTENDING KNIFE-HAND" THE VANISHING DISTANCE STYLE NEUTRALIZES DISTANCE,
THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT IN COMBAT.
THE DEADLY STYLE USES A KNIFE-LIKE HAND THAT EXTENDS AND RETRACTS. ENEMIES ARE MASSACRED
IT'S LIKE SUN WUKONG'S* MAGICAL STAFF.
(smile)
ANYWAY HE MUST BE USING ILLUSION TO OVERCOME THE DISTANCE.

*E/N: SUN WUKONG OR THE MONKEY KING. HYPERLINK(HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/SUN_WUKONG)

NOW DO YOU GET IT, SANDER-MAN?
YOU THINK THAT A MACHINE GUN IS ENOUGH TO GUARANTEE YOU VICTORY FROM A SAFE DISTANCE.
...BUT DISTANCE MEANS NOTHING IF IT IS NULLIFIED.
YOU WILL...

...DIE!!

?!
ONE OF THOSE SO-CALLED "MYSTERIES OF THE EAST?" SO FUCKING COOL.
(leer)
OH?
"LET ME SHOW YOU THE EROTIC MYSTERIES OF THE EAST"
(grin)
!!
ACTING LIKE A DISCI-PLINED WARRIOR AT THE SAME TIME YOU'RE DOING THIS BITCH
THAT HOW YOU GOT UNDER THE SKIRTS OF OUR BOSS'S MISTRESS? BULLSHIT LIKE THIS!"

How dare you!!
(angry)
!!
Do not insult Ma-chan!!
GEEZ.
(ironic smile)
HE SAID, "MA-CHAN."

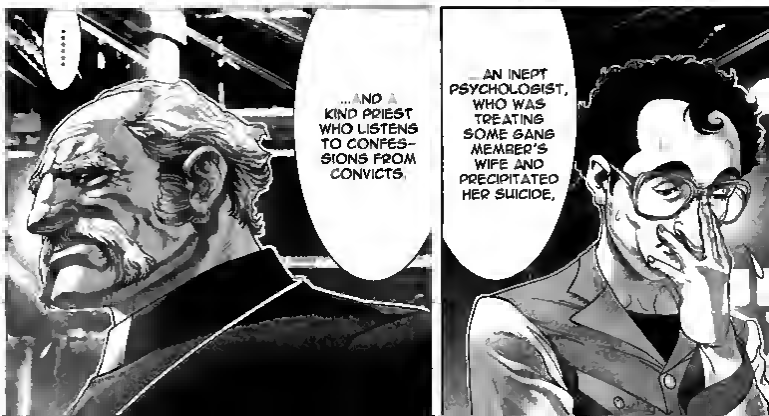
IS THAT REASON WHY YOU CAN'T FIND A QUALITY REAL-WORLD WOMAN?
YOU'RE A VIRGIN WHEN IT COMES TO FIGHTING. YOU ONLY KNOW TRAINING. BUT NEVER FACED REAL-WORLD COMBAT.
Huh!
OH? OR ELSE WHAT?
Enough with the inso-lence.
YOU GONNA KILL ME WITH YOUR FUCK-INGS...

...MYS-
TERIES
OF THE
EAST?

SAND-ER-MAN!
URGH!
!!
CALM DOWN, SANDER-MAN
WE REALLY NEED YOUR COMBAT ABILITIES
I CAN'T DEFEAT PUPPET WITH JUST MY BLADE AND SLASHES
I HOPE YOU UNDER-STAND

MA-CHAN..
I FUCKING GET IT!
SHIT
OH, SHE CALLS HIM RIN-CHAN BECAUSE HIS NAME IS KANOU KOUDIN
IT'S OKAY RIN-CHAN, YOU ARE SO FINE ♡
I'M SORRY I LET YOU BE HUMILI-ATED.
!
KIRA KIYO-SHI

WILL THIS FRACTURED TEAM BE ALL RIGHT?
IT WAS YOUR JOB TO CHOOSE THE CANDIDATES, SO THIS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.
WELL, IT CERTAINLY DOES WORRY ME.
AFTER ALL, I PICKED AN UNETHICAL DELIVERY EXPERT LIKE YOU.
WHO ARRANGED FOR TWO MORE BUYERS TO BID AND JACK UP THE PRICE OF YOUR SERVICES.
.....


.....
...AND A KIND PRIEST WHO LISTENS TO CONFESSIONS FROM CONVICTS.
...AN INEPT PSYCHOLOGIST, WHO WAS TREATING SOME GANG MEMBER'S WIFE AND PRECIPITATED HER SUICIDE.

.....
AND YOU, KIRA KIYOSHI...
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
THAT'S RIGHT. I COULDN'T DIG UP ANY DIRT ON YOU.
WHY ARE YOU BEING HUNTED?
WELL.....
...IT JUST HAP-PENED.
HOW SHOULD I PUT IT?
SOME-TIMES PEOPLE RUN INTO CERTAIN DIFFICULTIES WHEN THEY LIVE ON THE SHADY SIDE.
AND YOU KNOW WHEN THINGS LIKE THAT HAPPEN, IT'S SOME-TIMES WISER TO LET THINGS COOL DOWN A BIT
(grin)
<SIGH>
ANY-WAY...

...EVERY-ONE HERE...
...IS ON THE LAM BECAUSE YOU BROKE THE RULES IN YOUR OWN FIELD.
SO WE ARE ALL IN THE SAME BOAT.
LET'S ALL GET ALONG AND DO OUR BEST. ♡
BESIDES COOPERA-TION MAKES THINGS EASIER ♡
FOR EXAM-PLE, THIS...
...INFRARED SURVEIL-LANCE SYSTEM MONITORS THIS ABANDONED FACTORY
WITH THIS, WE WILL BE ALERTED BEFORE ♡PUP-PET'S ATTACK

THIS WAY, WE CAN PREVENT A SURPRISE ATTACK WHILE WE SLEEP LIKE THOSE YOU SEE IN SO MANY LOW-BUDGET MOVIES
SINCE WE HAVE A GOOD-SIZED CREW, LET'S TAKE TURNS ON WATCH
.....
YES, INDEED.
WE HAVE TO COOP-ERATE.
ALL RIGHT, LET'S BEGIN...
.....♡
OK♪

...OUR FIGHT AGAINST THE IN-VINCIBLE KILLER,
... PUP-PET!!

!
tap

tap
tap
tap
tap
tap
(Sigh)
(wry smile)
.....

POOR RIN-CHAN.
(KEYS)
FLIP
.....
HE WAS BETRAY-ED.
.....
BOSS...

...DO YOU WANT TO KILL ME?
WOMEN ARE REALLY MANIPULATIVE.
(smile)
THIS HAS TO BE A JOKE, ISN'T IT?
YOU JUST WANT TO TEACH ME A LESSON.

RIGHT?!
ISN'T THAT SO?!
!
PU...

อ้าาاا
ดูเหมือนจะ

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by KOIKE Rintarou and TAGUCHI Masayuki

Black Joke ch35

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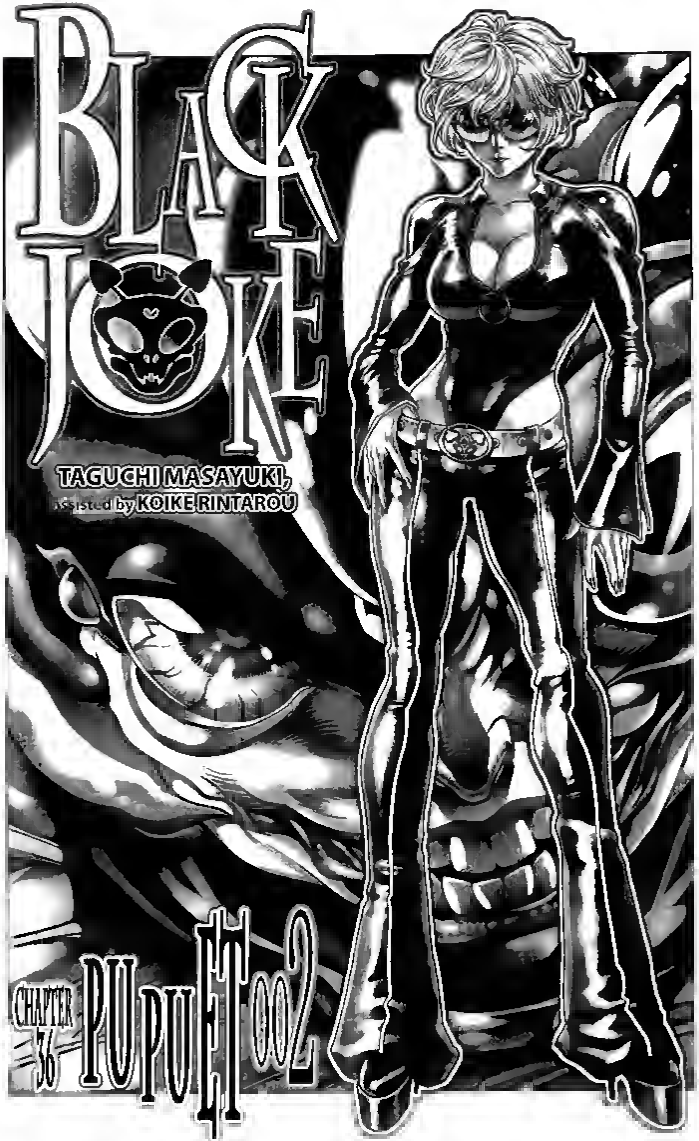
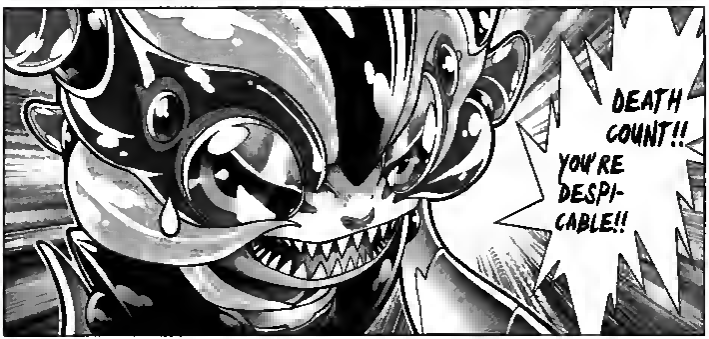

BLACK JOKE
TAGUCHI MASAYUKI,
assisted by KOIKE RINTAROU
CHAPTER 36
PU PU FT 002

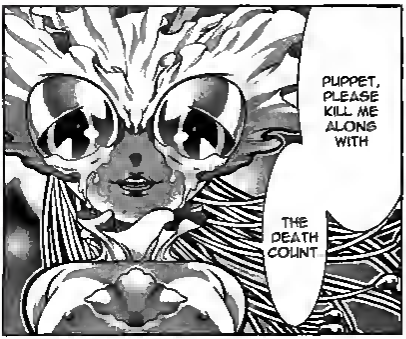
KLE
SWER
!

HAHAHA HAHA! YOU'RE MORE PERSISTENT THAN I EXPECTED, PUPPET!
BUT
LET'S SEE HOW YOU FARE AGAINST THIS BRILLIANT TACTIC!
FLO...?

FLOWER GIRL!!

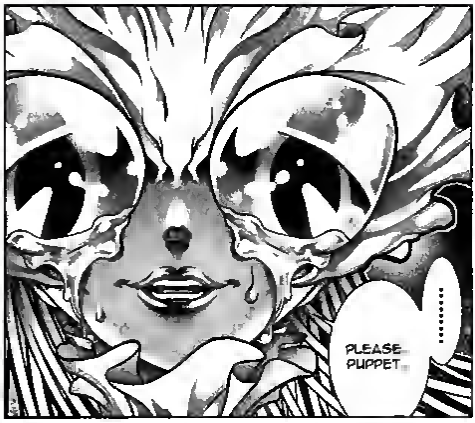

DEATH COUNT!!
YOU'RE DESPI-CABLE!!

DESPICABLE? WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, PUPPET?
THIS WOMAN IS MY PROPERTY!
AS HER OWNER, I AM FREE TO DO WHAT EVER I WANT TO HER,
BE IT LAVISHING LOVE UPON HER
OR USING HER AS A SHIELD AGAINST YOUR ATTACK!


PUPPET, PLEASE KILL ME ALONG WITH
THE DEATH COUNT

FLOWER GIRL!
LEAVE THAT MAN, RETURN TO ME!!

WHAT?!


PLEASE... PUPPET...
.....

I CAN'T DO THAT!
WHAT?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

...THE TRUE IDENTITY OF FLOWER GIRL!!
IF YOU KILL ME...
...THEN YOU'LL FIND...

HUH?!
?!

WHO?!
YOU...
FLOWER GIRL?
WAIT! WHAT?

Who are you?!

MA-CHAN.
MA...

!
HEY!

MAYA-
KO

KIRA
KIYOSHI,
FUCK YOU FOR
BRINGING US
HERE!
DIDN'T YOU
SAY THAT WE
WOULD BE SAFE
IF WE WATCHED
THE INFRARED
MONITOR?!

CUT THE
CRAP!
"OUT-
SMART-
ED?"
HA!

PUPPET
OUT-
SMARTED
US
YES
(wry
smile)

ONE OF US WAS KILLED!!
ALTHOUGH IT'S A SHAME...
...IT IS MAI-CHAN'S OWN FAULT FOR MOVING AROUND ALONE.
(grim smile)
MAI-CHAN IS THE MISTRESS OF THIS MUSASHINO SHIGEHARU, THE MAN IN THE CALL RECORDS, RIGHT?
AND SO WE SEE, INSTEAD OF STANDING BY RIN-CHAN,
...SHE WAS WATCHING OUT FOR HERSELF, ACTING TO SAVE HER OWN SKIN, GETTING READY TO DUMP HER PRECIOUS LOVER.
(smile)

THAT'S ENOUGH.
PLEASE DON'T SLANDER...
...THE DEAD MAI-CHAN ANY MORE.

SHEATHE
A TRULY PASSIONATE GUY
.....
OF COURSE NOT ♡
FOR A JAPANESE GUY, YOU'RE QUITE ADMIRABLE.
.....
KANOU-SAN,

COMPARED TO JAPANESE GUYS I KNOW, WITH THEIR LOW SELF-ESTEEM AND ACTING SO SLY...
...YOU HAVE A TRUE SENSE OF LOYALTY. I ADMIRE THAT.

CAN YOU HEAP ME OUT?
UM MM.
.....
THIS COMIC BOOK
THE TITLE OF THE COMIC IS "PUPPET," THE SAME AS THE NAME OF THE KILLER HUNTING US
THEY PUBLISHED A REMAKE THREE YEARS AGO.
IT'S A PRETTY SHORT SERIES SINCE THERE AREN'T MANY CHAPTERS
LET ME EXPLAIN
WHAT ABOUT IT THEN?
SO?
.....

THE ORIGINAL PUPPET WORKS WERE RELEASED IN AMERICA IN 1974.
THE ORIGINAL STORY WAS DIFFERENT FROM THE REMAKE. IT WAS A HUMOR SERIES FEATURING A BUNCH OF CUTE MONSTERS MAKING FOOLS OF THEMSELVES.
SINCE THE ORIGINAL PUPPET WAS NOT POPULAR, NO ONE HEARD OF IT.
THE AUTHOR OF THE REMAKE IS MIKHAIL GORKI, A RUSSIAN
AND IN IT, THE PUPPET'S KILLING METHOD IS
THE "VANISHING DISTANCE," A MARTIAL ART DEVELOPED BY THE SOVIET UNION
SO,
I BELIEVE THE AUTHOR READ THE ORIGINAL WORKS...
...AND WHAT'S MORE...
...THE KILLER MUST BE RELATED TO THE PUPPET REMAKE.

I MERELY STATE THAT THERE MUST BE A CONNECTION BETWEEN THEM.
I CAN'T SAY FOR CERTAIN WHETHER MR. GORKI IS PUPPET OR NOT.
ARE YOU SAYING THAT MIKHAIL GORKI IS PUPPET?
A KILLER CARTOONIST? (smile)
I BELIEVE YOU MUST HAVE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH HIM.
BESIDES, MR KIRA,
...TODOME KENSUKE!
NONE OTHER THAN THE PRESIDENT OF TO ONSEN HOTEL...
BECAUSE THE RIGHTS TO THE PUPPET REMAKE ARE OWNED BY
I'M SURPRISED YOU MANAGED TO FIND THAT OUT. (sly smile)
OH-HO.

PLEASE HEAR ME OUT!
WAIT!
HOW ARE THEY RELATED?!
HEY!
GO AHEAD ♡
NOW...
IF I MAY CONTINUE
THE INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE ORIGINAL AND THE REMAKE
AROUSED MY SUSPICIONS

...SIMILAR TO THE ACTUAL LIVING ENVIRONMENT OF THE REAL KILLER, PUPPET.
IN THE REMAKE, THE HERO IS ISOLATED FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD..
COMPLETELY LACKING THE HUMOR OF THE ORIGINAL WORKS.
THE REMAKE IS SO PESSIMISTIC AND DEALS WITH MENTAL DISORDERS,
IN THE END OF THE STORY, HE MADE UP HIS MIND TO BECOME A KILLER
PUPPET..
AND HE WAS SO SHOCKED THAT HE LOST HIS SANITY.
AT THE CLIMAX OF THE STORY, THE TRUE IDENTITY OF THE PUPPET'S PARTNER, FLOWER GIRL, WAS REVEALED,
...ARE YOU?!
WHO...
FLOWER GIRL?
WAIT! WHAT?

SEE? SURELY THE PUPPET IN THE COMIC HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE KILLER PUPPET.
SO? ARE YOU SAYING THAT THE COMIC PORTRAYS THE REAL-LIFE PUPPET?
HE COULD BE A FAN OF THE COMIC, WHO CALLS HIM-SELF PUPPET WHILE CO-SPLAYING
THERE IS A PIECE OF DECISIVE EVIDENCE
THE KEY LIES IN THE STYLE OF THIS COMIC
THERE IS A VERY STRANGE PICTURE HERE
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
STRANGE?

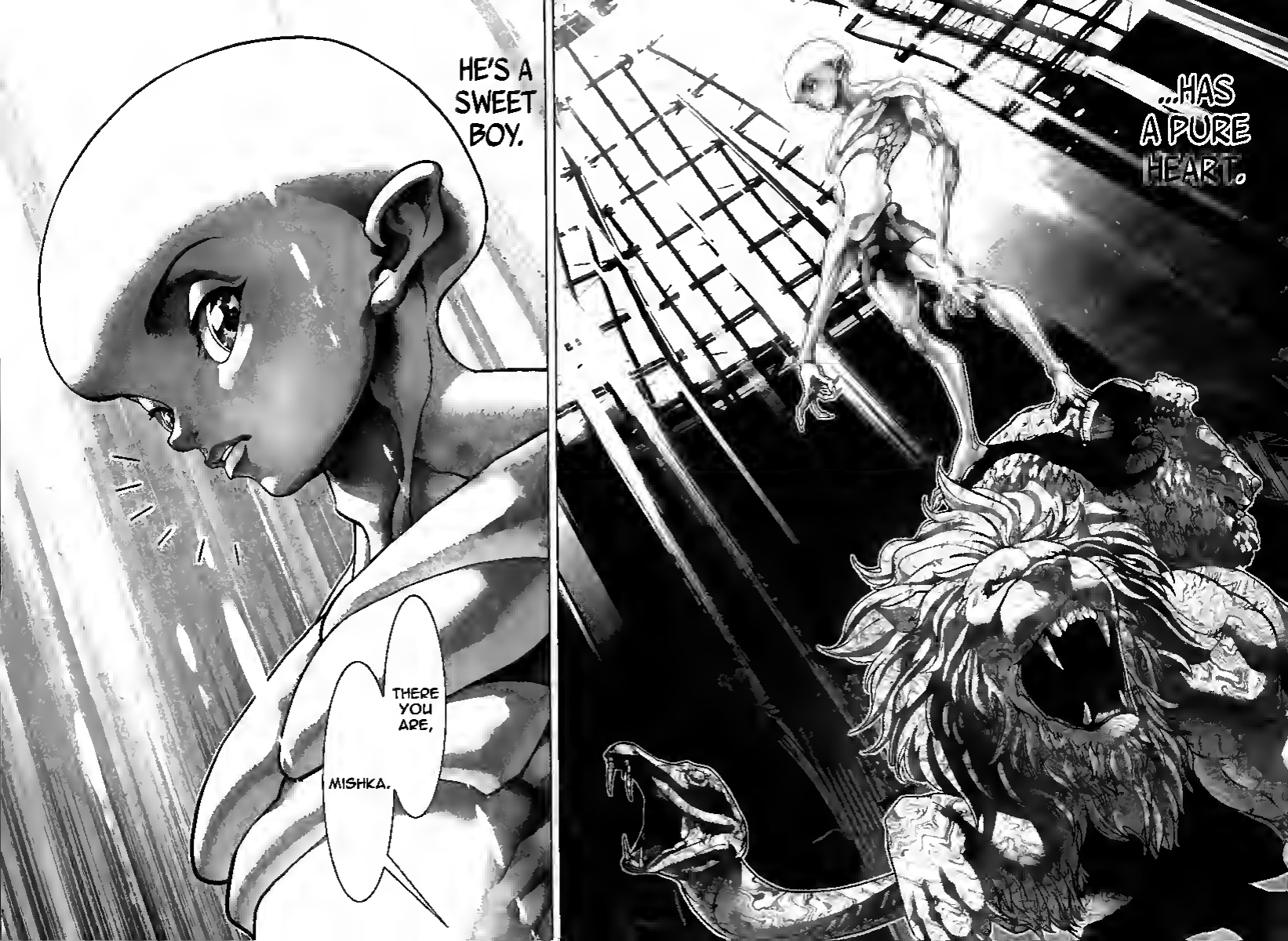
LOOK HERE —
THE PART WHEN FLOWER GIRL REVEALS HER TRUE IDENTITY
SUDDENLY, IN CONTRAST TO THE CARTOONISH STYLE OF THE REST OF THE WORK, A REALISTIC IMAGE IS INSERTED HERE OUT OF THE BLUE
IT COULD SIMPLY INDICATE THAT THE PROTAGONIST IS LOSING HIS SANITY
HOWEVER, THE CHANGE IN STYLE IS STILL CONSPICUOUS
I COULDN'T HELP NOTICING THE DISCREPANCY WITH THE REST OF THE COMIC
IF...
WHAT IF...

...THIS WOMAN IS THE TRUE IDENTITY OF FLOWER GIRL?
ALTHOUGH SHE SHOWS NO SIMILARITY TO FLOWER GIRL'S SWEET PERSONALITY,
THERE IS NO MISTAKING THIS ANALOGY
IT'S OBVIOUS THAT THIS SOLDIER IS THE DEATH COUNT
AND THE YOUNG MAN WITH THE WEIRD APPEAR-ANCE...
MUST BE PUPPET WHEN HE WAS YOUNG

?!
L-LET ME SEE!
WAIT
HEY!! "
WHAT'S THIS?!
あた
clench
EX-ACTLY.

ANSWER ME, FATHER NIKOLAI!!
WHY ARE YOU IN THE COMIC?!
WERE YOU AN ACCOMPLICE OF THE KILLER, PUPPET?

THEN YOU MUST NOT KNOW THE REAL BOY
EH?!
YOU [redacted] HIM A [redacted].
.....
HE..
MIKHAIL GORKI..


HE'S A SWEET BOY.
THERE YOU ARE, MISHKA.
...HAS A PURE HEART.

IT'S TIME FOR YOUR TRAIN-ING.
I'LL DO MY BEST, FLOWER GIRL
OKAY! HERE I COME ♡ ♡

!
MORNING, MIKHAIL
HOW ARE YOU?

LET'S GET IN A GOOD WORK-OUT TODAY ☆
OKAY! ☆
LET'S TRY REAL HARD, ☆
PUP-PET ♡

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by KOIKE Rintarou and TAGUCHI Masayuki

Black Joke v6 ch36

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ch.37
PUPPET 3
BLAC
JOKE

...COMMITTED A GRAVE SIN.
MY MOTHERLAND,
.....
...THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS...
THERE WERE OFFICIALS WHO USED THE TWISTED JUSTIFICATION OF STRENGTHENING THE NATION...
...TO CONDUCT OUTRAGEOUS EXPERIMENTS!!
TERRIFYING EXPERIMENTS! BETRAYALS OF GOD. THEY SOLD THEIR SOULS TO THE DEVIL.
.....
THE CHIMERA...

...STOOD IN THE ANCIENT HALLS WHERE THE EXPERIMENTS TOOK PLACE.
THAT CREATURE WAS THE UTMOST HORROR OF MYTHOLOGY. HER STATUE...
SHE IS SAID TO HAVE A LION'S HEAD, A GOAT'S HEAD AND A SNAKE FOR A TAIL, SPEWING FIRE FROM HER MOUTH.
...IS A LEGENDARY CREATURE FROM GREEK MYTHOLOGY.
IRONICALLY, MIKHAIL LOVED STANDING ATOP THAT STATUE.
HOW IRONIC.
STANDING THERE AS IF HE LOVED THE ATROCITY THAT HE MOST RESEMBLED

IN BIOLOGY, A CHIMERA IS AN ORGANISM THAT HAS MULTIPLE GENOMES
CHIMERA IS KNOWN AS "CHIMAERA" IN LATIN. IN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES, IT IS "CHIMERA."
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? ARE YOU SAYING THAT BOY, MIKHAIL... THAT THE MAN NAMED MIKHAIL IS THE MONSTER, PUPPET?
.....
IN THE EXPERIMENTS, THEIR SUBJECTS RECEIVED DOSAGES EXCEEDING LETHAL AMOUNTS
WHAT'S MORE, THEY PERFORMED GENETIC MANIPULATIONS - A BLASPHEMY TO HUMANITY.
YES. THEY PLANNED TO CREATE A CHIMERA.
TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T BELONG IN THIS WORLD.
DEADLY CREATURES!!

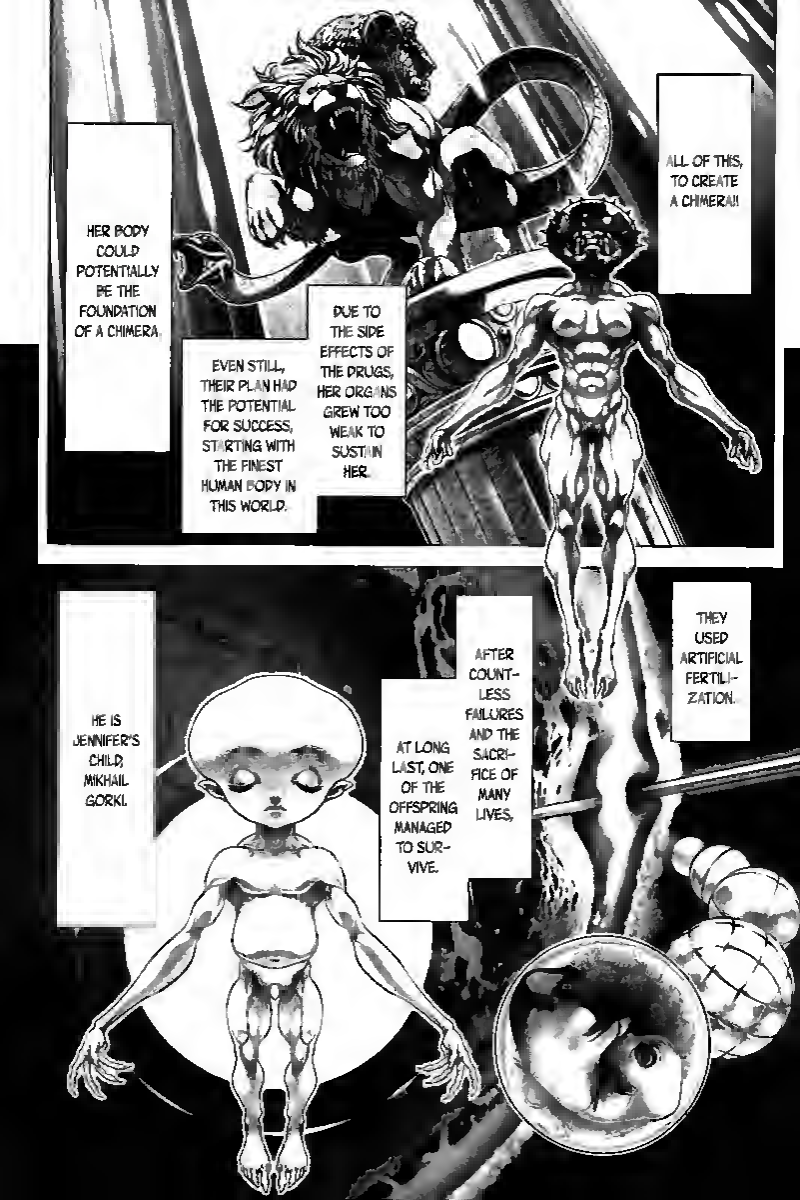
GRRW...
COME HERE ♡
!
Ah

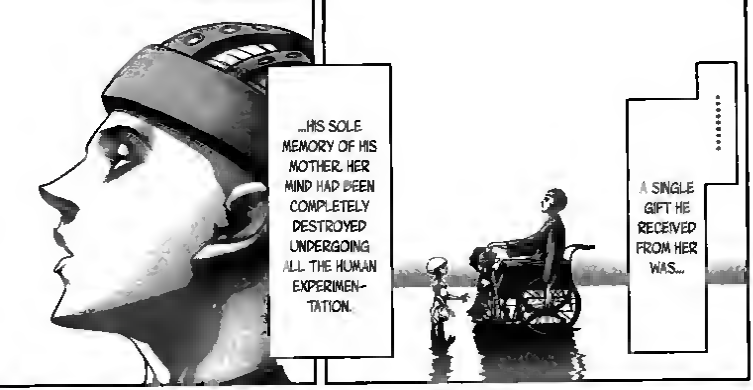
WELL DONE, MIKHAIL.
YOU'RE AS STRONG AS EVER.
MIK-HAIL.
!
PUP-PET.

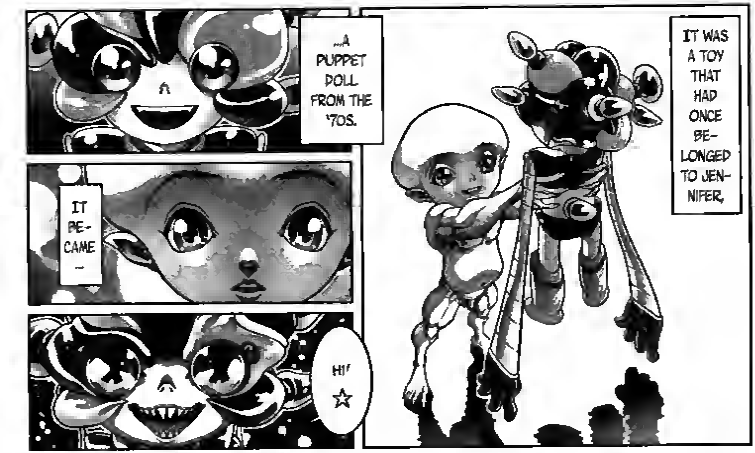
BUT...
...YOU MUST SHOW NO MERCY ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
YEAH♡ I ☆GOT IT.
I'LL DO AS ♡YOU SAY, FLOWER GIRL.
THE PRICE HE PAID FOR THAT SUPER-HUMAN ABILITY WAS...
...THE LOSS OF HIS REASONING.
MIKHAIL GORKI...
HIS MOTHER SHARED THE SAME PAIN, TOO.

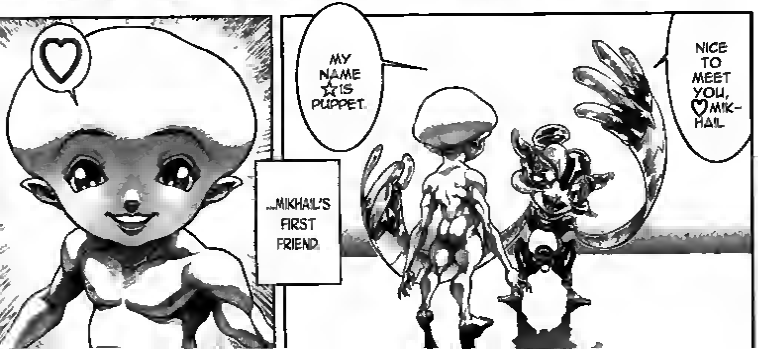
SPORTS ILLUSTRATED
FASTEST WOMAN IN THE WORLD
USA
569
FLORENCE GRIFFITH JENNIFER
WAS AN EXCELLENT TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE FROM AMERICA.
IN APRIL 1980, CONCERNED BY INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS, SHE SECRETLY WENT TO THE SOVIET UNION AS A GOODWILL AMBASSADOR TO PROMOTE MOSCOW AS THE HOST FOR THE OLYMPICS
.....
HOW-EVER, DURING HER STAY...
...SHE LOST HER MIND AFTER DOING DRUGS...
...AND COM-MITTED A TERRIFYING TRAGEDY.

A MASSACRE.
SHE DISEMBOWELED THREE GIGOLOS IN THE HOTEL SHE WHERE WAS STAYING.
THE OFFICIALS OF MY NATION CONFINED JENNIFER AFTER FAKING HER SUICIDE,
...AND CONDUCTED VARIOUS EXPERIMENTS ON HER.
WHY?
.....
WHY DO THIS?


ALL OF THIS, TO CREATE A CHIMERA!!
HER BODY COULD POTENTIALLY BE THE FOUNDATION OF A CHIMERA.
DUE TO THE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE DRUGS, HER ORGANS GREW TOO WEAK TO SUSTAIN HER.
EVEN STILL, THEIR PLAN HAD THE POTENTIAL FOR SUCCESS, STARTING WITH THE FINEST HUMAN BODY IN THIS WORLD.
THEY USED ARTIFICIAL FERTILI-ZATION.
AFTER COUNT-LESS FAILURES AND THE SACRI-FICE OF MANY LIVES,
AT LONG LAST, ONE OF THE OFFSPRING MANAGED TO SUR-VIVE.
HE IS JENNIFER'S CHILD, MIKHAIL GORKI.

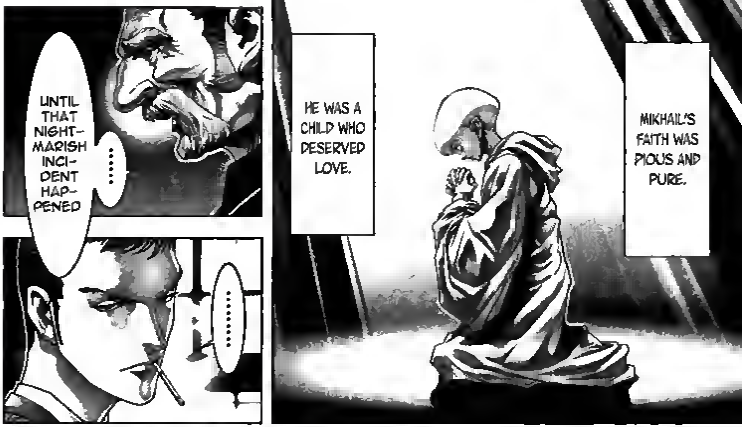

A SINGLE GIFT HE RECEIVED FROM HER WAS...
.....
...HIS SOLE MEMORY OF HIS MOTHER. HER MIND HAD BEEN COMPLETELY DESTROYED UNDERGOING ALL THE HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION.

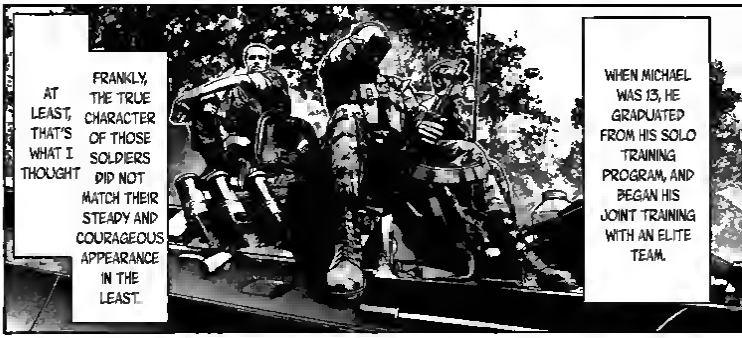

IT WAS A TOY THAT HAD ONCE BELONGED TO JENNIFER.
...A PUPPET DOLL FROM THE '70S.
IT BECAME...
HI! ☆


NICE TO MEET YOU, ♡MIKHAIL.
MY NAME ☆IS PUPPET.
...MIKHAIL'S FIRST FRIEND.

AN IMAGINARY FRIEND.
HOW DOES THE GOD-DAMN PUPPET TALK?! ARE YOU SHIT TING US?
HEY! CUT THE BULLSHIT! YOU FUCKING PRIEST!!
YOU COULD SAY THAT IT IS A NATURAL PHENOME-NON THAT COULD HAPPEN TO ANYONE DURING THEIR GROWTH.
THIS CONDITION IS PROMINENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN UNFAMILIAR WITH SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS MOST OF THE TIME, THE CHILDREN GROW OUT OF IT ONCE THEY BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE REAL WORLD
DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION, SOME CHILDREN TALK TO AN IMAGINARY FRIEND IN THEIR MINDS OR SEE A PRETEND FRIEND BEFORE THEM.
JUST AS ITS NAME SUG-GESTS, IT'S MERELY A PRODUCT OF THE HUMAN IMAGINA-TION.
...ALSO KNOWN AS MULTIPLE PERSON-ALITY DISORDER.
BUT IF THAT PERSON ALSO EXPERIENCES OVERBEARING STRESS, HE WILL BEGIN TO DIVERT HIS EMOTIONS, RESULTING IN A DISSOCIATIVE DISORDER.

EVER SINCE HE WAS BORN,
IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT HE WAS HIGHLY UNSTABLE EMOTION-ALLY.
FATHER NIKOLAI,
DOES PUPPET, ER, DOES MIKHAIL HAVE MPD?
TO MANAGE HIS EMOTIONAL STATE, PSYCHIATRIST MARINA TROZKI WAS ASSIGNED AS HIS ATTENDING PHYSICIAN.
MIKHAIL CONFUSED THAT WOMAN FOR FLOWER GIRL,
HIS SECOND FRIEND
ON THE OTHER HAND I PUT MY TRUST IN GOD AND HOPED FOR MIKHAIL TO BE SAVED
YES ...


MIKHAIL'S FAITH WAS PIOUS AND PURE.
HE WAS A CHILD WHO DESERVED LOVE.
UNTIL THAT NIGHTMARISH INCIDENT HAPPENED
.....
.....


WHEN MICHAEL WAS 13, HE GRADUATED FROM HIS SOLO TRAINING PROGRAM, AND BEGAN HIS JOINT TRAINING WITH AN ELITE TEAM.
FRANKLY, THE TRUE CHARACTER OF THOSE SOLDIERS DID NOT MATCH THEIR STEADY AND COURAGEOUS APPEARANCE IN THE LEAST.
AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT

THEY WERE CONSTANTLY STALKING THE WEAK TO SHOW OFF THEIR STRENGTH, AND TO SATISFY THEIR EGOS.
FURTHERMORE...

...THEY WERE OVER-COME WITH JEALOUSY.
...WHEN SOMEONE STRONGER THAN THEM APPEARED.
PUP-PET!
IN THE END...
THOSE WEASELS DISCOVERED HIS WEAK-NESS, AND ATTACKED IT TO BOOST THEIR SELF-CONFIDENCE.
HEY, MIK-HAIL!!

STOP!!
HOW-EVER,
THE SOLDIERS MADE A GRAVE ERROR,
PU...
PUP PET ...?
THEY COMMIT-TED AN IRRE-VERSIBLE MISTAKE.
THIS INCIDENT TRIG-GERED...
DON'T DIE!
...PUP-PET'S...
D-DON'T WORRY, ♡MIK-HAIL.
I WILL ALWAYS BE ☆WITH YOU.
!
...MIK-HAIL'S...
YOU'RE RIGHT, PUP-☆PET. ♡

WE'LL BE TO-GETH-ER FOR-EVER. ♡
...A MONSTER'S AWAKEN-ING!!!

!!
STOP THIS!!
PUP-PET!!
FLO—
WHY DID YOU STOP ME, FLOWER GIRL?
AREN'T YOU MY FRIEND?
FLOW-ER GIRL
COME TO YOUR SENSES, PUPPET.

EVERY-THING BEFORE YOUR EYES...
...IS AN ILLU-SION.
WAIT! WHAT?
FLOW-ER GIRL?
YOU...
WHO ARE YOU?!

IT'S EXACTLY THE SAME!
THE REMAKE OF "PUPPET" IS DESCRIBING PUPPET!
THE COMIC PROTAGONIST DISCOVERED THAT FLOWER GIRL WAS ACTUALLY A DOLL — MERELY AN IMAGINARY FRIEND.
THE REAL-WORLD PUPPET FOUND OUT THAT HE HAD BEEN FOOLING HIMSELF.
AT THE END OF THE COMIC,
PUPPET CAME TO HIS SENSES AND LOST HIS STRENGTH. HE LEFT THE PEATH COUNT'S ARMY TO START A LIFE AS A KILLER IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
IN THE REAL WORLD, HE'S AN ASSASSIN FROM THE FORMER SOVIET UNION ARMY..
KIRA-SAN!
YOUR FORMER COMPANY OWNS THE RIGHTS TO THIS PUBLICATION.
DID YOU HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH PUPPET?
NOT AT ALL.
(smile)

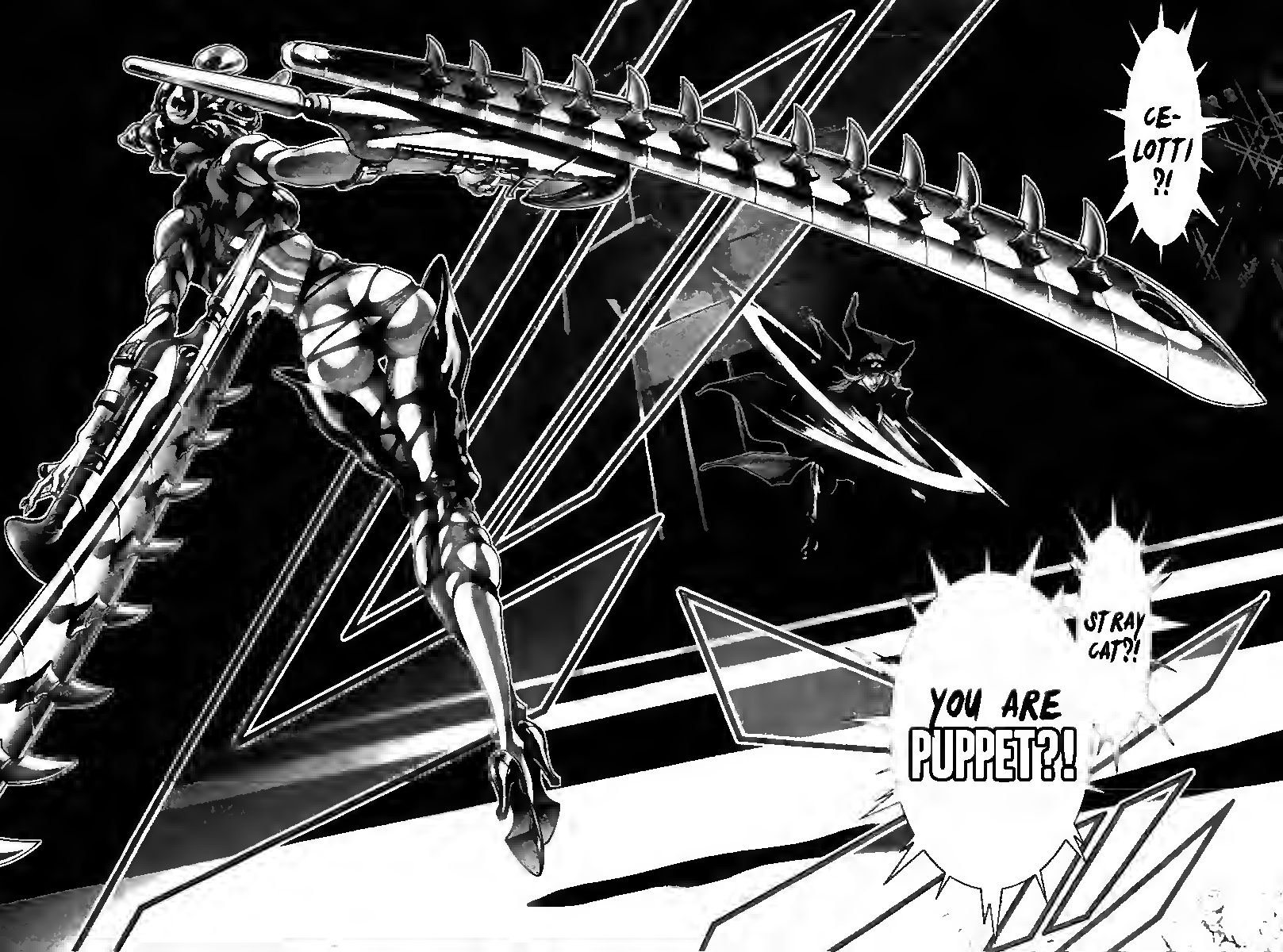
?!
MICHAEL IS NOT AN ASSASSIN FROM THE FORMER SOVIET ARMY.
NO...
WERE SUDDENLY SENT TO THE MAIN COMPUTER OF TO ONSEN HOTEL.
OUT OF THE BLUE, SOME FILES
I HAPPENED TO BE AMONG THE FEW LUCKY SURVIVORS.
AFTER BURNING DOWN THE FORT HOUSING THE RESEARCH FACILITIES, HE DISAPPEARED WITHOUT A TRACE
THE DAY THAT MICHAEL LOST HIS SANITY HE CONTINUED TO RAMPAGE UNCONTROLLABLY.
...I CAN'T FIND OUT WHOSE ORDERS HE WAS ACTING UPON.
AT THIS POINT...
.....

I'LL NAIL THAT FUCKER!!
I DON'T GIVE A SHIT WHOSE FUCKING FAULT THIS IS! THESE CRAPPY FAIRY TALES ARE NONE OF MY FUCKING BUSINESS.
FUCK!!
KANOU-SAN.
!

HEY
...IF WE DEFEAT PUPPET AND SURVIVE, DO YOU WANT TO BE MY PARTNER?
I...DON'T MIND...
THEN LET'S SEAL THE DEAL...
WITH MORE THAN A HAND-SHAKE. ♡
W-WAIT, STRAY CAT
AREN'T YOU GOING A LITTLE FAST?
BESIDES, I JUST LOST MA-CHAN..
I'M THE SAME
.....
I LOST MY OTHER HALF.
PUPPET KILLED MY LOVER.

HUH?!
CE...?
PLEASE, CALL ME CELOTTI ♡
STRAY CAT!
A FRENCH NAME.
CELOTTI ♡
WAIT A SEC.
CELOTTI LOU IS MY REAL NAME
I HAVEN'T BATHED AT ALL.
I'VE BEEN WEARING THIS LEATHER SUIT SINCE YESTERDAY.
SORRY, I WANT TO FRESHEN UP A BIT FIRST.
HUH?

ALL RIGHT
BODY ODOR
♡
WE FRENCH HAVE A STRONGER BODY ODOR THAN ASIANS
PLEASE LET ME WASH UP
♡
.....
♡
.....
!!
YOU...
click
!


CE-
LOTTI
?!
ST RAY
CAT?!
YOU ARE
PUPPET?!

PUPPET
IS A
WOMAN?!
下集待續

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by KOIKE Rintarou and TAGUCHI Masayuki

Black Joke v6 ch37

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